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A VANISHED RACE OF ABORIGINAL FOUNDERS

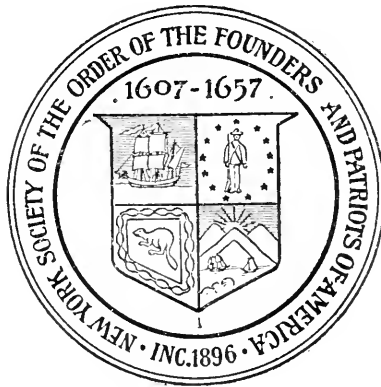


"STEADFAST FOR GOD AND COUNTRY"

AN ADDRESS BY
BRIG.-GENERAL HENRY STUART TURRILL, U.S.A.
Genealogist and Past Councillor-General
DELIVERED BEFORE
THE NEW YORK SOCIETY
OF THE
ORDER OF THE FOUNDERS AND
PATRIOTS OF AMERICA
AT THE HOTEL MANHATTAN, NEW YORK

FEBRUARY 14, 1907

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THE NEW YORK SOCIETY
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FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 19, 1907

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A VANISHED RACE OF ABORIGINAL FOUNDERS

*Mr. Governor, Ladies and Gentlemen, and Associates of the Order of
the Founders and Patriots of America :*

If a right-angled triangle were to be erected in New Mexico, the base along the Rio Grande from Las Cruces to Socoro, the perpendicular west to near the Arizona line, the hypotenuse from this apex to the point of departure, Las Cruces, within this triangle is embraced some of the fairest mountain regions that it has ever been my fortune to explore. My first visit to this region was rather exceptional, even for the very varied duties of an army officer on frontier duty.

Under army supervision several bands of the Apaches had been gathered together on the eastern slopes of the Membres Mountains, and had their agency for several years at the little Mexican pueblo of Cañada Alamosa. It was found that this situation brought the Indians into close contact with the demoralizing influences of the small Mexican towns along the Rio Grande. It was, therefore, determined, if a suitable place more remote from the settled portion of the country could be found, to establish a reservation and build an agency and an army post and to remove these Indians to it. A Board consisting of the Commanding Officer of the District of New Mexico, the Indian Superintendent of New Mexico and Arizona and myself were appointed to examine and select a proper spot for such an establishment.

The only road (other than Indian trails) that led into this region was an old, little used wagon trail that led from Rio Grande across the Leuerra Plains to the Little Colorado River in Arizona. The two senior members of the Board were of an age that rendered travel on horseback over the exceedingly rough Indian trails of the mountains extremely disagreeable, if not dangerous. So it was determined that I should go with the Indians to such places as they were satisfied with, and, when a spot was found that I should deem suitable for the purpose, find a road to the spot and guide the party to it for a final consideration of the matter.

I had picked up a sort of polyglot language, consisting of English, Spanish, Apache and Navajo words, with quite a bit of "sign talk" that rendered communication with the Indians easy; indeed for a long time my name among these Indians was "Big Soldier Man that Talks Apache."

And thus alone with more than a hundred of the wildest Indians of the frontier for weeks I roamed through this beautiful Indian paradise. I must say for my wild entertainers that never in all my service have I received such constant care for my personal safety. Did we come to a difficult bit of the mountain trails, a stalwart savage was at my pony's head and another had hold of his tail, and the whole procession was stopped until I was safely down, for fear that some rock might be detached by those following and I be injured by its fall, Loco saying "that I must not be hurt, as it would be laid to the Indians and would make trouble."

The Mogollion Mountain range, extending along the southwest side of the triangle, from the northwest to the southeast, and presenting for almost its entire length a bold, rocky wall, whose cloud-capped peaks seem like a curtain around the land to cut it off from the sweltering heat and choking sand storms of the Gila and San Francisco valleys, and the great sweltering plains of southwestern New Mexico.

Many a longing look has been cast from the crawling wagon trains or the ancient overland coach, as they dragged their weary way day after day across these dreary wastes to the land beyond those cloud-capped peaks, and visions of flashing rills and cool shades have surged through the fevered brains of the thirst-maddened toilers.

At the base of the triangle extending from Socoro to Las Cruces winds the Rio Grande, an occasional flash of brown waters, through the broad belt of vivid green of its cottonwood embowered valley, the brown foothills of the Membres range gradually rising to the deep green of its pine-clad summit. On the northern side, or the perpendicular of the triangle, extending from Socoro to the Arizona line, stand a line of sentinel peaks, the Sierra Magdalena, the Picacho Mogino, the Sierra Leuerras and the Sierra Dactil, each guarding a green valley that winds from the north into this paradise of mountain life. Within this triangle are three distinct mountain chains, the Mogollion, the

Tularosa and the Membres range, with innumerable detached peaks and intervening valleys.

In this region three rivers of considerable size have their origin, the Gila, the San Francisco and the Membres. On the eastern slope of the Membres range five or six small streams flow down to the Rio Grande. The fountain head of these rivers are innumerable little springs and fountains, welling out from under some moss-covered rock, a little thread of bright water joining with other threads and winding and twisting in the deep shade, fretting and foaming over the gray and red rocks, for all of this region is of the old granite and sienite formation; then rippling more sedately through broader valleys, under the shade of the centuries-old pines, their massive brown columns rising more than a hundred feet in air and supporting an almost impenetrable roof of green foliage and affording a most delightful shade for the denizens of the region, man and animal alike. At intervals these valleys open out into broader savannas, a billowy sea of waving bent grass, wild rye and oats, and as the streams enlarge by the joining of many of these mountain brooks the valleys narrow and are filled with dense groves of the American acacia. The bordering rough granite foothills are covered with the "tuny," the "mescal" and "yucca" up to their "piñon"-covered summits.

The animal life of this region was as varied and abundant as the vegetable. Through the thickets and over the rough hills the American "grizzly" (the acknowledged king of the animals of the western wilds) unmolested took his way, with his little less formidable cousin, the cinnamon bear, supreme in the animal kingdom. The elk, the mule or black tailed deer and the red or fallow deer cropped the sweet mountain "gramma" or wandered at their own sweet will over the plains or through the close-covered thickets of those mountain valleys. The large timber wolf, the dreaded "lobo," with the mountain lion, took second place in control of the region, while the bobcat and ocelot with the despised coyote took a much lower place, and were only a terror to the mountain rats and rabbits and the bird life of the region, and these were not lacking, for the call of the wild turkey and the drumming of the ruffed grouse was heard from every thicket, and the blue, the tufted and the mecena quail literally covered the country, so that the life of these minor

marauders was one of ease and plenty. In the mountain meadows where it was possible the industrious beaver had built his dam and fashioned his snug house, admitting to a tolerated acquaintance the muskrat, the otter and the mink, and here they lived in perfect accord with the myriads of brown-spotted trout, at least did the beaver and muskrat, for it is probable that the otter and mink dined often upon their finny friends.

For unnumbered ages the bright sun warmed this land; the gentle showers brought into existence all of this world of green and gold. The mighty pines, that were the product of centuries, grown old and riven by some mountain storm, sank to slow decay, to be replaced by a new creation.

At last into this smiling land came a new factor, Man. The first rude traces of his occupation are to be found on that wonderful mesa of southern Colorado and in the cliff dwellings of Cañon Chelly, these so far in the dark ages of the past that no estimate of their age can be made. That they lived and toiled for years, probably for centuries, is all the record that they have left.

After them another wave of Founders came from the north to the land, the Aztec. This first great tide swept southward, leaving little islands of semi-civilization where conditions were satisfactory and ending in the empire of Mexico. The region in this land that they chose for their abiding place is on a line across New Mexico and Arizona to the Pacific, from a point somewhat north of Las Vegas, and on the south, from the ruins of the Grand Quivero, near the northern point of the Sierra Blanca, westward to the Pacific. Within this region they built many of their many-storied villages, of which some remain to this day, with all of the customs and the religion of that far-off age.

Again long years must have passed, and while yet in the darkness of pre-historic times came another wave of Founders, this an entirely primitive man, a thorough and complete savage, the Apache, inventing nothing, copying little from their more intelligent neighbors; they are passing away, the most complete type of savage man. Their numbers were not large, but their cunning and warlike qualities enabled them to maintain their existence against their much more numerous and intelligent neighbors, the Aztecs. They early discovered the Indian paradise just described and there they fixed their home. They were

from the first and always have been a mountain Indian, and as their numbers increased, as with few warlike tribes about them they were bound to do, the surplus sought other mountains and established other families. The Mescalero, the Jigarilla, the White Mountain and the Tonto Apaches thus came to be bands of the Apache nation, and so the nation came into existence. But always and as long as they could maintain their hold on it this favored land was considered their home.

There had been but little effort on the part of the Aztecs to occupy this part of the country. The ruins of the Corona del Pueblo, near Socoro, and a small ruined pueblo in one of the upper valleys of the San Francisco were all the evidences of Aztec occupation that I have ever seen in the Apache country. This ruin in the San Francisco valley was of very ancient date. Standing by the ruin with Loco, a more than ordinarily intelligent chief of the Apaches, I asked him: "Who were these people?" Waving his hand toward the north, he said: "Montezuma! long, long ago my people drove them away."

For long years, probably for centuries, if the traditions of both people can be trusted, the Apaches lived somewhat in accord with their Aztec neighbors to the north and south of them, and their bands spread as far east as the mountains on the west of the Pecos valley, and west through the mountain region of Arizona as far as the Colorado. The mutual desire to share in the rich hunting regions of the buffalo country, from which they were alike driven by the more numerous and active tribes of the Indians of the plains, led to an armed neutrality at home and an active co-operation for war upon the plains and formed as much of a bond of friendship as could be expected between two such dissimilar peoples.

Nearly four hundred years ago there came to this land, to the Aztec and Apache alike, a most wonderful happening. The Apache from his mountain fastness and the Aztec from the top of his many-storied stone house saw slowly winding up the valley of the Rio Grande a glittering train, that wound like a great serpent into their land. It would have been impossible to have flashed a greater wonder upon these people. Here was a band of beings who controlled and produced at will the thunder and lightning, that so much dreaded natural element, the wrath of an offended God, to the savage mind; who, clad in shining

raiment, flashing like the sun, were carried with the speed of the wind upon creatures the like of which their wildest imagination had never conceived. No wonder that the Apache believed that the Montezuma of the "stone house people" had come out of the sun to his faithful followers and that certain destruction awaited them, the Ishmael of the land.

This certainly was a most memorable meeting, the crudest of the stone age, the obsidian arrow head, lance point and knife, matched against the steel-clad warrior on his barbed charger, the flash of his gleaming lance mingling with the duller but more sinister gleam of his Toledo blade. It is no wonder that after a few encounters with the mailclad followers of Alvara Munez (Cabreza de Vaca), when, in 1536, they first swept over the country, that the Apache quickly fled to the shelter of his mountains and left his Aztec neighbor to the mercy of his God.

In the succeeding invasions of Juan Vasquez de Coronado, in 1539 and 1540, and of Juan de Onate, in 1598 and 1599, all of the Aztec villages were brought under Spanish rule. The Apache in his mountain strongholds alone remained unsubdued. Evidence is not wanting that in some of their encounters with the Conquistadors the Apache came off with the honors of war. I have on one or two occasions found among them genuine old Toledo blades, used as lance heads, and on one of them, even after the lapse of centuries, could be traced among the blue wavy lines of the genuine Toledo, in quaint old Spanish text, the inscription, "Draw me not without cause, sheath me not without honor." This old blade was the pride of its Indian possessor and treasured as evidence of his family's valor in the "old times."

After a few attempts at conquest by the soldiers, and of conversion by the priests, and finding that neither gold nor souls were to be won, these hardy warriors were left in comparative peace in their mountain strongholds. In the old manuscripts of the mission period of New Mexico and Arizona the soldiers seem to have regarded him as a good fighting man, the conquest of whom might afford some credit to his arms. To the priest, however, he was ever an object of the greatest abhorrence, and the kindest names that could be found for him in their description were "the mountain devils," "children of the devil," with-

out souls, and fully akin to their great captain, the North American grizzly.

Through the entire time of the Spanish occupation of the country the Apaches seem to have held their mountain homes, with only occasional encounters with the soldiers of Spain. A rather interesting document exists among the very early records of the church at El Paso, Mexico. It is an order by the Spanish commander (at the request of the head of the Church) to a commandante in the Spanish service to take two hundred and fifty soldiers and to go to the great pine forests on the "Rio Bravo" and to there cut and prepare the "vegas" for the church then being built at El Paso. This order was dated September, 1627. At the bottom of this order is the report of the commandante, saying that he had gone up the "Rio Bravo" a great distance, more than sixty leagues, to the pine country, where he fixed his camp and cut and prepared the timber for the next high water in the river; that, owing to the many alarms and attacks from the wild men of the mountains, it was the Spring rise of 1629 before he was able to complete his task and bring the timber to El Paso. This camp must have been about the mouth of the Cuchillo Negro. On the head waters of this river had long been the principal village of the Apaches, and this document furnishes the evidence that at this early date these mountain warriors had to be taken into account, even by the veterans of Spain. I would say that those same vegas still support the roof of the church in El Paso.

After the establishment of the Republic of Mexico and the departure of the Spanish soldiers the Apaches seem to have been much more a power for evil. The new government seems not to have held them in check as had the Spanish. Here came to front an Indian family that has, I think, no parallel in our Indian history. We have records of the lives of many illustrious Indians, nature's great men; but these rarely are great for more than one generation, of much less consequence in the second and disappearing in the third. During the period from the establishment of the Republic of Mexico and the close of the Mexican War, when the country passed to the control of the United States, the deeds of an Apache chief spread terror along the settlements of the Rio Grande from El Paso to Santa Fé.

His home was on the upper waters of one of the small rivers that flow to the Rio Grande from the eastern slopes of the Membrès Mountains. His name, Cuchillo Negro, signifying Black Knife, carried terror through all the Mexican and Indian pueblos in all the surrounding country. He was the most advanced in the rude civilization of the country of any Apache chieftain that had preceded him. Recognizing the added comforts that the crude agriculture of the country gave to even the hunting Indian, and not wishing to have the trouble of wresting the scanty crops from his surrounding neighbors, with his hardy warriors he would sweep down on some Mexican hamlet and carry the entire population off to his mountain stronghold, and there hold them as slaves, compelling them to dig asequias and cultivate for his use the crops common to the country. The evidences of this cultivation still existed in and about his village at the time that I first saw his country. He was living at the time of General Harney's conquest of the country in 1848, but was said to have been a very old man at that date and to have died about 1853. I was never able to learn much of him, as the old Mexicans always spoke of him with "bated breath" as "muy malo," and the old trappers and plainsman like Kit Carson, St. Vrain and Frank de Lisle (the two last I knew intimately) never ventured into his country. He was ever known as the most terrible scourge that the country had ever known. The Indians and Mexicans both claimed that he came of a long line of chieftains, the Indians saying that his family had always been the head of the Apache nation. At his death he left two sons. The eldest, Mangus Colorado, succeeded to the chieftainship of the tribe, while the second son (whose name I was never able to learn) was in command of a band of considerable strength. Mangus Colorado had one son, Castile, who on Mangus' murder in the guardhouse at Fort Bayard in 1864 became the head of the tribe. Castile was killed in an engagement with the Eighth U. S. Cavalry in 1868, leaving the chieftainship of the tribe to his cousin Cochise, who was the head of the tribe until his death in 1882-3. He was succeeded by his son, known to us as "young Cochise"; what other name he had we never knew. He was killed by renegade Indians within the first year of his accession to the head of the tribe, which had then shrunk to a small band of old men and a few women and children.

Thus in thirty-six years of American rule every member but two of this family that for many years, perhaps more than a century, had ruled this tribe had met a violent death at the hands of the Americans.

With the discovery of gold in California, a route of travel to the Pacific Coast, the Old Southern Overland, was quickly established, and the crawling wagon trains and the primitive overland coaches were dragging their weary way over these arid plains to the land of gold. From the first, quite amicable relations were maintained between these wayfarers and the Indian inhabitants of the country, particularly with the Overland stage line. A well-authenticated story is told of an encounter between a station keeper at one of the company's stations and Cochise. This station keeper had long had very friendly relations with Cochise, and the exchange of game for tobacco and ammunition had long been the custom between them. On one occasion the station man found an Indian stealing corn from the company's storehouse. He drove him off, administering a sound kick as he went, which much accelerated his departure. The next day Cochise appeared with a number of his father's band and made complaint of the bad treatment of his follower. The station keeper acknowledged the violence used, but said that the man was a thief, and that instead of shooting him, as he had a right to do by Indian law, he had kicked him out of camp. If he was not satisfied with his treatment, he would do as they did in his country when one had struck another a blow. They would stand up and fight it out. Cochise should put his man up at a distance of fifteen paces, giving him whatever arms he wanted, and at the word, to be given by Cochise, they should commence to fight in any way that they wished until one or the other was killed. To this Cochise assented as perfectly fair and they proceeded to do so. The Indian, when he saw how the thing was going, concluded that his honor could be better soothed by a present of tobacco. To this Cochise would not agree, telling the Indian that he was a thief, had lied about it, and now was a coward, and that he should fight or be driven out of the band. Thus cornered, the Indian mustered up the courage to stand up before the station keeper. Cochise gave the word to fire and the Indian was killed before he had time to raise his gun. Cochise declared the whole thing fair and no trouble came to the station

man on account of the affair. This incident was told me by the superintendent of the stage company, who vouched for its absolute truth.

Friendly relations were maintained between the whites and all parts of the Apache nation up to the year 1857, when they became somewhat strained by lawless acts on the part of passing wagon trains. In 1858 there was committed an act of bad judgment, to use the very kindest expression, that plunged the whole frontier into the fiercest Indian war that has ever visited that section. A young officer just from West Point was stationed in the southwestern part of New Mexico. He was appealed to by some Mexicans living at his post to rescue a little girl said to be a captive in the band of Cochise's father. Procuring the services of a citizen, who while in the employ of the stage company had known many of these Indians and could speak their language, he proceeded to the known habitat of the band and requested a council with them. There was no trouble in inducing the Indians to come in for the council and the subject of the talk was entered upon. The Indians in apparent fairness stated that they did not know of any such child and did not believe that such a child was with their band, but that if such was the case it should be sought and returned to the lieutenant at his post. This seemed a satisfactory solution of the matter and the Indians were invited to the officer's tent for something to eat. While they were thus engaged the lieutenant had ordered his sergeant to march the detachment up to the tent and to take the entire party prisoners. The front of the tent was towards a little stream that flowed through the narrow valley, while at the back was a very steep hill. As the soldiers approached, the quick ears of the Indians detected the movement and a rush was made for the door of the tent to escape. They were met with a line of fixed bayonets that rendered escape impossible and the party was captured. In the scuffle one Indian was killed by a bayonet thrust and three, the captain of the band and two sons, were captured. The oldest son, Cochise, was at the back of the tent, with a cup of coffee in one hand and his knife, with which he had been cutting some beef, in the other. Instead of rushing to the door of the tent with the others, he turned and with his knife slashed the back of the tent and, jumping through the hole thus made, fled up the hill and escaped. He told me years after

that when he reached the top of the hill he still had the coffee cup in his hand. Had the matter ended here, it might have been in some way arranged, although the situation was of the gravest. But the officer's ignorance of Indian ways seemed to be phenomenal, and he again tried to open communication with the Indians. At first the interpreter flatly refused to have anything to do with the matter (he had known nothing of the lieutenant's plan to capture the Indians), but after much persuasion and, some say, threats, he was induced to again try to communicate with the Indians. In so doing he was captured and dragged off by them. The next day he was brought to such a position that he could call to the lieutenant, but without any chance of a rescue. The Indians proposed to exchange him for the Indians that were prisoners. To this the lieutenant would not agree, but told him to tell the Indians that if he was injured he would hang the Indians that he held prisoners. His mutilated remains were found a short time after and the three Indians were promptly hung.

An Indian war ensued that involved all the branches of the Apache tribe as well as the Navajos, who were always ready for trouble on any or no pretext. The army was in sufficient force in that region to control the situation until the commencement of the troubles of 1861, but the defections of that period and the cowardly surrender of Major Linde and the Fort Fillmore garrison left the country almost entirely stripped of troops, so that until the arrival of the Colorado volunteers from the north and the California column from the west the Apaches worked their diabolical will with the country. They believed that they had forever driven the whites from their country. The active operations following the arrival of these two considerable bodies of troops compelled the surrender of the entire Navajo nation and drove what remained of the Apaches to those mountain fastnesses before described, with the loss of very many of their tribe.

Upon the family of Cuchillo Negro the loss had been particularly heavy. The trouble was started by the hanging without cause of a son and two grandsons. The oldest son, Mangus Colorado, the head of the tribe, while in the guardhouse at Fort Bayard, had been murdered on the plea that he was trying to escape. And when in 1867 Castile, the then head of the tribe, was killed in a fair fight with the Eighth Cavalry, he being the attacking party, there remained but Cochise, with his boy of

about ten years, to continue the struggle, and the added fierceness and brutality showed that he remembered the affair of 1858. But these struggles were always to the disadvantage of the Indians. These continued reverses had such a dispiriting effect upon the Indians that soon small bands, under their immediate captains, began to break off from the tribe and make peace. By the beginning of the year 1871 we had succeeded in making a sort of peace with the heads of all of the bands except that of Cochise. Depredations still continued and we believed that much of these depredations were the work of these so-called friendly Indians. It was promptly charged to Cochise by these Indians. We were therefore particularly anxious to effect an understanding with him.

From the unfortunate occurrence of 1858 until his final agreement in 1872 I do not believe that Cochise ever had friendly relations except with one white man. This was a Capt. Jefferds, who had commanded a troop of California volunteer cavalry. He had settled in the country after his discharge from the volunteer service. He was supposed to be prospecting in the mountains in Cochise's country and was supposed to have effected friendly relations with Cochise. This we believed could only have been accomplished by means of a contraband trade with this band. It happened to fall to my lot to be the one to furnish the proof positive in the matter. I was much given to hunting and to visiting the Mexican settlements and Indian camps in the country surrounding the fort at which I was then stationed, and as I had been able to afford the people, Mexican and Indian alike, some aid in the way of my profession, I was quite well known to both and was received in friendship by all. In one of my excursions I came upon Capt. Jefferds with a half dozen of the most villainous-looking individuals, whether Mexican or Indian I did not have time to see. They were arranging a lot of packs of powder and lead for transportation to the mountains. The surprise was mutual and I concluded that I was not exactly a welcome visitor. I did not stand on the order of my going, but went at once. I had caught the name marked on one of the packages, which was that of a merchant in the vicinity. So at one shot I had bagged the whole bunch, having the proof positive of this illicit trade, which, if known to the surrounding ranchmen, would have taken Jefferds and his commercial friend

to the nearest tree. It was determined by the military authorities to act on the fears of these culprits and through them endeavor to arrange for a meeting with Cochise. They were all, Cochise as well as the others, in a very bad predicament, as by action on the part of the military the merchant would be destroyed, Jefferds either in jail or driven to Cochise, who, with his supplies cut off, could be soon hunted down and destroyed or driven to Mexico, neither of which contingencies was desirable as a termination of the war.

Negotiations were opened through the trader and Jefferds, which led to the arrangements for a meeting between the commanding officer of the district of New Mexico and Cochise. This meeting was arranged to take place about twenty-five miles west of the little Mexican pueblo of Cañada Alamosa. The party was to consist of eight men on each side, the negotiators to be unarmed and no troops or Indians nearer than twenty-five miles. I had the somewhat doubtful honor to be one of the party, for such was Cochise's reputation that it was generally believed that this would prove a second Canby affair. The military party consisted of Gen. Gordon Granger, commanding the District of New Mexico; Gen. J. Irwin Gregg, Col. Eighth Cavalry; Lieut.-Col. J. P. Willard, Assistant Adjutant-General of the district, and myself, and each had a mounted orderly fully armed. Col. Willard and myself had our revolvers, as we did not consider ourselves as negotiators.

When we reached the place of conference there were no Indians to be seen, so we dismounted and seated ourselves under the shade of a cottonwood tree to await developments. Soon Capt. T. Jefferds approached us down a steep hillside and greeted the party. To the Generals he was quite profuse, and to me, I thought, a bit sinister, as if remembering our last encounter. This may have been my imagination, but I took it as a warning to look out for myself if anything went wrong in the conference. He told us that Cochise would soon be with us, chatting pleasantly with the party. Col. Willard and myself had made up our minds that we would account for Cochise and Jefferds if anything went wrong in the council.

Soon from over the hill from which Jefferds had come appeared seven Indians, one in front, and two paces in the rear two followed, while some ten or twelve yards behind were four fully

armed Indians, who halted at the exact distance from our party that our orderlies were. Thus the Indian party was the exact counterpart of ours, Cochise and Jefferds without arms, as were Gens. Granger and Gregg; two Indians with revolvers, as were Col. Willard and myself, and four fully armed Indians, as were our orderlies. As Cochise approached we all looked with much curiosity, as we believed ourselves the first white men that had seen him face to face and lived to tell of it since his outbreak fourteen years before. He was rather tall, over six feet, with broad shoulders, and impressed one as a wonderfully strong man, of much endurance, accustomed to command and to expect instant and implicit obedience. This was characteristic of his family; his uncle, Mangus Colorado, and his son, Castile, had been large men, and if the tales of the Mexicans could be believed, his grandfather, old Cuchillo Negro, was almost a giant. Altogether he impressed me as the strongest Indian that I had ever seen, and at this time I had known some of the famous Indians of the West. I had been in Indian fights with Kicking Bird, Satanta and old Satank, had known Stone Calf, Red Cloud and Spot Tail, of the Sioux. I spoke Apache after a fashion and was quite friendly with Loco and Victoria, and knew Cadette, of the Navajoes. He seemed to me in this first meeting the greatest Indian that I had yet seen. In my somewhat extended life in the Indian country I had known many of the famous Indians of the West—Young Man Afraid of his Horses, Gaul, Black Wolf, Roman Nose, Chiefs Joseph and Moses, of the Western Indians, and I do not hesitate in naming Cochise as the greatest Indian that I have ever met.

As Cochise and his party approached we moved forward a few steps to meet him, Jefferds placing himself by the side of Cochise as of his party. He introduced the party. I, being the junior of the party, came last in the introduction. I fancied that I received a bit more of attention than the others; I did not know whether it was because I could speak Apache (I caught Jefferds telling Cochise to look out, as I could understand him) or because of my discoveries of the trade business; at any rate, I felt myself a marked man in the proceedings. Gen. Granger, who was the spokesman of our party, commenced the usual "patter" of the Indian counsel talk, "of the love of the Grand Tatta (the President) for his red children and of the happiness that it would give

him to have his white and red children live together in peace and harmony." He continued this kind of talk for some time, thinking no doubt that he was making quite an impression on his Indian audience, which might have been so, but certainly not on his white hearers, and I for one was hoping that he would finish and let the Indian have his say. All of this was very fairly rendered in Apache by Jefferds, and as my particular part of the function was to see that a fair interpretation was given on both sides I was particularly alert, more so, perhaps, as I was fully convinced that our personal safety, and my own especially, depended on the outcome of the council.

When Granger had finished Cochise waited a moment and then rose to reply. He was without the Indian adornments, usually a great feature of the councils that I had hitherto seen. Clad in a buckskin hunting shirt, belted in at the waist by a Navajo garter, leggins and moccasins of the same material, the only bit of finery about him was a somewhat gaudy Mexican poncho, which was draped about him with a careless grace; his face while at rest was perfectly impassive. I wish it were within my power to give as I heard it this finest bit of Indian oratory that I ever listened to. He commenced in meager, somewhat guttural Apache, but as he warmed to his subject he slid into the more graceful Spanish, of which he was a master, and with the expressive "sign talk" he made an address that affected me as but one other orator ever has, and that was Wendell Phillips in one of his early abolition speeches. His speech, as I remember it after a lapse of thirty-five years, was about as follows:

"This for a very long time has been the home of my people; they came from the darkness, few in numbers and feeble. The country was held by a much stronger and more numerous people, and from their stone houses we were quickly driven. We were a hunting people, living on the animals that we could kill. We came to these mountains about us; no one lived here, and so we took them for our home and country. Here we grew from the first feeble band to be a great people, and covered the whole country as the clouds cover the mountains. Many people came to our country. First the Spanish, with their horses and their iron shirts, their long knives and guns, great wonders to my simple people. We fought some, but they never tried to drive us from our homes in these mountains. After many years the

Spanish soldiers were driven away and the Mexican ruled the land. With these little wars came, but we were now a strong people and we did not fear them. At last in my youth came the white man, your people. Under the counsels of my grandfather, who had for a very long time been the head of the Apaches, they were received with friendship. Soon their numbers increased and many passed through my country to the great waters of the setting sun. Your soldiers came and their strong houses were all through my country. I received favors from your people and did all that I could in return and we lived at peace. At last your soldiers did me a very great wrong, and I and my whole people went to war with them. At first we were successful and your soldiers were driven away and your people killed and we again possessed our land. Soon many soldiers came from the north and from the west, and my people were driven to the mountain hiding places; but these did not protect us, and soon my people were flying from one mountain to another, driven by the soldiers, even as the wind is now driving the clouds. I have fought long and as best I could against you. I have destroyed many of your people, but where I have destroyed one white man many have come in his place; but where an Indian has been killed, there has been none to come in his place, so that the great people that welcomed you with acts of kindness to this land are now but a feeble band that fly before your soldiers as the deer before the hunter, and must all perish if this war continues. I have come to you, not from any love for you or for your great father in Washington, or from any regard for his or your wishes, but as a conquered chief, to try to save alive the few people that still remain to me. I am the last of my family, a family that for very many years have been the leaders of this people, and on me depends their future, whether they shall utterly vanish from the land or that a small remnant remain for a few years to see the sun rise over these mountains, their home. I here pledge my word, a word that has never been broken, that if your great father will set aside a part of my own country, where I and my little band can live, we will remain at peace with your people forever. If from his abundance he will give food for my women and children, whose protectors his soldiers have killed, with blankets to cover their nakedness, I will receive them with

gratitude. If not, I will do my best to feed and clothe them, in peace with the white man. I have spoken."

We all sat for a moment in silence; even the garrulous Gen. Granger was for a moment silenced. Much general talk ensued, in which it was agreed that Cochise should remain with his band, in the neighborhood of Cañada Alamosa, receiving rations and annuity goods with the bands of Loco and Victoria, and a treaty to that effect was duly signed by the Generals and Cochise, and that when he should select a satisfactory place he should have a reservation by himself. He was urged to go to Washington and talk to the President; he said no, that he had rather talk to soldiers, for they sometimes kept their word; that he did not like white men's ways; "that he did not care to eat little fishes out of tin boxes."

We had brought with us to the little Mexican town where we had left our cavalry escort a lot of articles, which we thought would be acceptable to him and his people, as an earnest of our good faith. As Gen. Granger mentioned these to him, and asked him to go to the town to receive them, his face lighted up for a moment; but he said no, he did not wish to go with the soldiers.

Capt. Jefferds turned to him and said: "If you want to go, I will pledge you my head that you will be safe; these men are talking straight to you."

Cochise turned to him and said: "You believe these white men. I trusted them once; I went to their camp; my father and two brothers were hung; no, I will not go."

After this council, Cochise remained with his band in the vicinity of Cañada Alamosa, drawing his rations with the bands of Loco and Victoria, but urged as early a separation as possible, saying that he could not control other than his own band, and that troubles would arise that he could not prevent, and that the blame would be laid to him.

He was the only Indian chief that I ever knew that could enforce instant obedience to a given command. It was the custom for all of the New Mexican Apaches west of the Rio Grande to gather at Cañada Alamosa to receive their rations once a month. On ration days a small detachment of infantry from the neighboring posts were sent to the agency to prevent any disorder. I was frequently at the agency on these issue

days. On one occasion it appeared to me that there had been much drinking among the Indians, and signs of trouble from that cause were present. The guard was under the command of a sergeant. The sergeant was much troubled by the conditions existing and early came to me for advice and assistance. The men, about twenty-five in number, were quietly placed in the most advantageous position available and the outcome awaited with some anxiety. The explosion soon came in a dispute between the issue clerk and a drunken Indian who was trying to get more than his proper rations. The Indian drew his gun and tried to shoot the clerk. Loco and Victoria, with much talk and entreaty, succeeded in getting the gun, but the Indian was quickly supplied with another by some of his drunken friends, and serious trouble seemed imminent. At this juncture Cochise appeared. At a glance he took in the situation. He gave a yell so quick and shrill that I did not catch its import, but its effect was instantly apparent. Some sixty or eighty of his immediate band rushed among the struggling mass about the door of the agency and in no gentle manner forced them away, while two stalwart bucks rushed upon the offending Indian and, throwing him face down, each seized a leg and ran with him out of the town. Cochise came at once to me and said that the soldiers were not needed, that he would keep the Indians in order. He then ordered Loco and Victoria to at once leave the town with all their people. They demurred, saying that they had not yet received their rations. He told them to go at once or he would kill them all, that when they were sober they could come back for their rations, but to go at once, and they went.

I have never before or since seen such prompt obedience among Indians. After this occurrence Cochise kept himself and his band as much apart from the other Indians as possible. He was soon removed to a reservation of his own choosing in the San Simone valley, with his friend Capt. Jefferds as his agent. He lived at peace with the whites until his death, some years after.

We all forgave Jefferds for his peccadilloes of the contraband trade, and many blessed him for the part that he took in the abatement of this terrible scourge of southern New Mexico. Truly this was a case of doing evil that great good might come.

On Cochise's death-bed he called his son, the last survivor of this line of strong men, to him, and in the most solemn manner committed his few surviving people to his care, charging him, as he honored the memory of his long line of illustrious ancestors, and as he loved his people, to keep the faith that he had pledged to the white chiefs in the mountains. And this was the most savage of all the savages that I have ever known. The boy kept the faith and was killed by a band of renegade Apaches whom he was trying to induce to return to the reservation. And thus died every member of this family that for five generations had been the known head of the Apache nation.

From that beautiful mountain country that the Apache loved so well and defended so bravely all are gone. In the sweltering heat of the San Carlos Reservation are gathered a few scattered remnants of these mountain bands, while the last of the irreconcilables, Geronimo and Loco, with a few followers, still exist in banishment under the shadow of Fort Sill. Truly a Vanished Race of Aboriginal Founders.



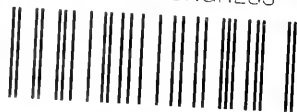
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